

Patterned Community Sound Change in Progress: American ay-raising and North Kyungsang Korean Loanword Tone Change

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In an article that can be viewed as a response to the emergence of third wave sociolinguistics (e.g. Eckert 2012), which underscores the role of the individual in language change in progress, Labov (2012) emphasizes the “breathtaking uniformities” that can be found in cases of in-progress community language change. This paper reports on two instances of patterned community language change in-progress: American Raising in Fort Wayne, Indiana and suffixal loanword accent change in North Kyungsang Korean.

American Raising is an emerging pan-regional phenomenon that entails the raising of the diphthong /ay/ in pre-voiceless environments usually without concomitant aw-raising, thus distinguishing it from Canadian raising. Berkson et al. (2017) and Davis et al. (2019) have documented the incipient nature of ay-raising in Fort Wayne Indiana that seems to have suddenly emerged with a generation born starting around 1990. We discuss four different patterns of incipient ay-raising found among younger speakers in the community showing how it is different from more mature varieties of ay-raising as in Canada (and in areas of the US adjacent to Canada). As an example of a difference between incipient ay-raising and more mature ay-raising is that some incipient ay-raisers do not raise in bisyllabic trochaic words such as *Nike* nor before t-flaps as in *writing*, where raising in these words is characteristic of mature varieties.

Suffixal accent change in North Kyungsang (NK) Korean loanwords has been recently documented in Hwang and Davis (2019). NK Korean allows only one accented syllable in a single prosodic word; if an accented stem is combined with an accented suffix, one of the accents must be deleted. Focusing on final-accented words, according to traditional observation (e.g. Kenstowicz and Sohn 2001), a final-accented English loanword maintains its stem accent even when adjacent to an accented suffix; this is unlike final-accented NK native words whereby suffixal accent prevails when a final accented stem clashes with an accented suffix. In our recent work across different generations of NK Korean speakers we show that the native word pattern of suffixal accent preservation under clash is extending to loanwords but in a way that shows patterned diffusion across generations, such that longer final-accented loanwords realize the NK native word pattern of suffixal accent but monosyllabic loanwords tend to preserve stem accent. We conclude by emphasizing the uniformities within the pattern of variation that can be found in cases of in-progress community language change.